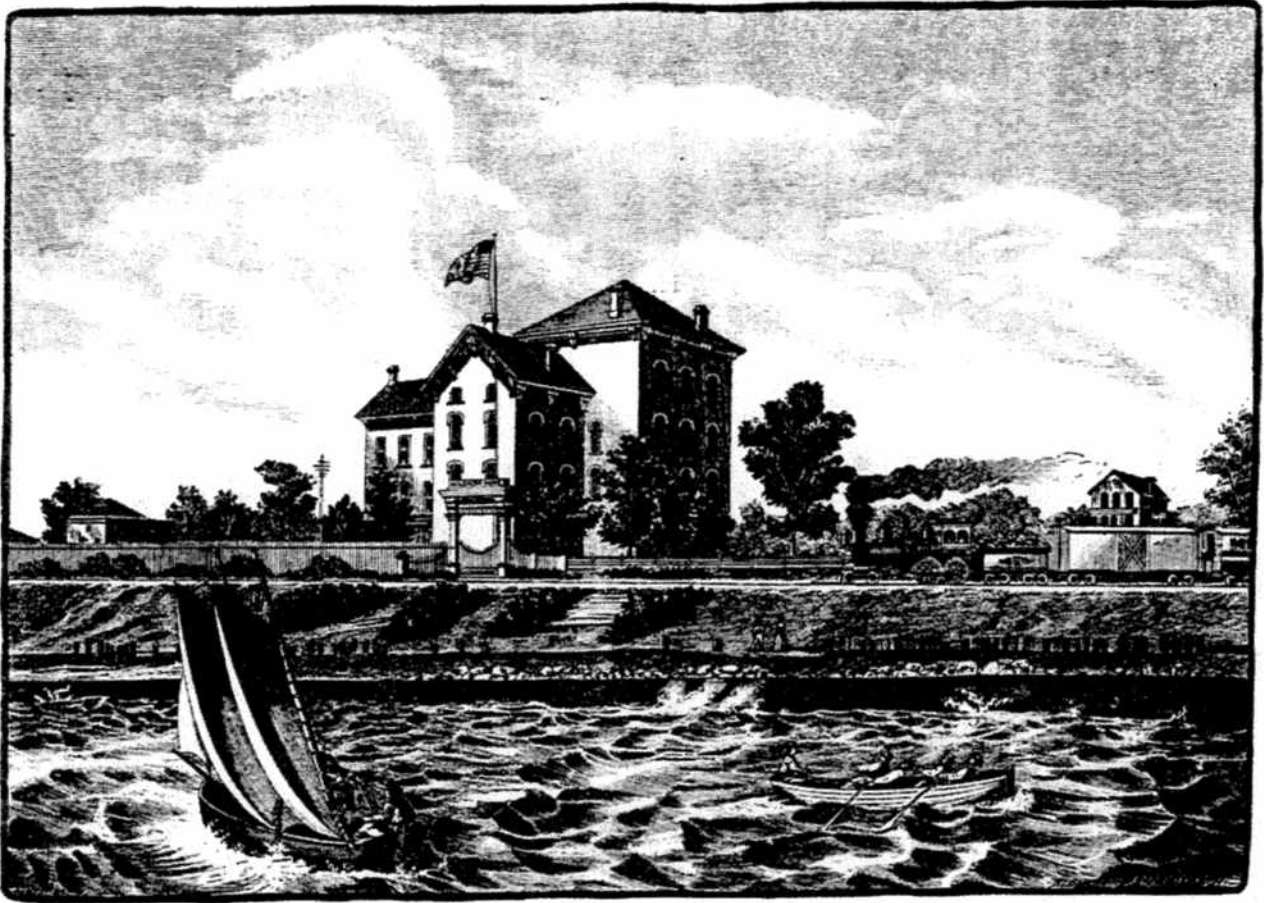


DO NOT REMOVE

PRELIMINARY STAFF SUMMARY OF INFORMATION



Soldiers' Home

739 E. 35th Street

Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks July 1975
Rewritten December 1985
Reprinted April 1996



CITY OF CHICAGO
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development
J.F. Boyle, Jr., Commissioner



COVER: The Soldier's Home, shown in this 1885 engraving, is the last remaining building in Chicago that was associated with the Civil War. **TOP:** In this view looking south from 35th Street, the left portion is the 1886 addition designed by W.W. Boyington, the architect of the Chicago Water Tower and Pumping Station, a designated Chicago Landmark. **ABOVE:** Historic features such as the double-carved, wooden bracket at the cornice are repeated on each addition, except the 1957 addition to the far right.

SOLDIERS' HOME

739 E. 35th St.

(Constructed in phases, dating from 1864 to 1923

Architect for the 1866 section: W. W. Boyington

Architects for the other phases: unknown)

The SOLDIERS' HOME is the last surviving building in Chicago that has an association with the Civil War. It was constructed at the edge of the Camp Douglas prison camp through the efforts of a women's group. During the war, it was a hospital for convalescent soldiers. Following the war, it served as a home for disabled Union Army veterans.

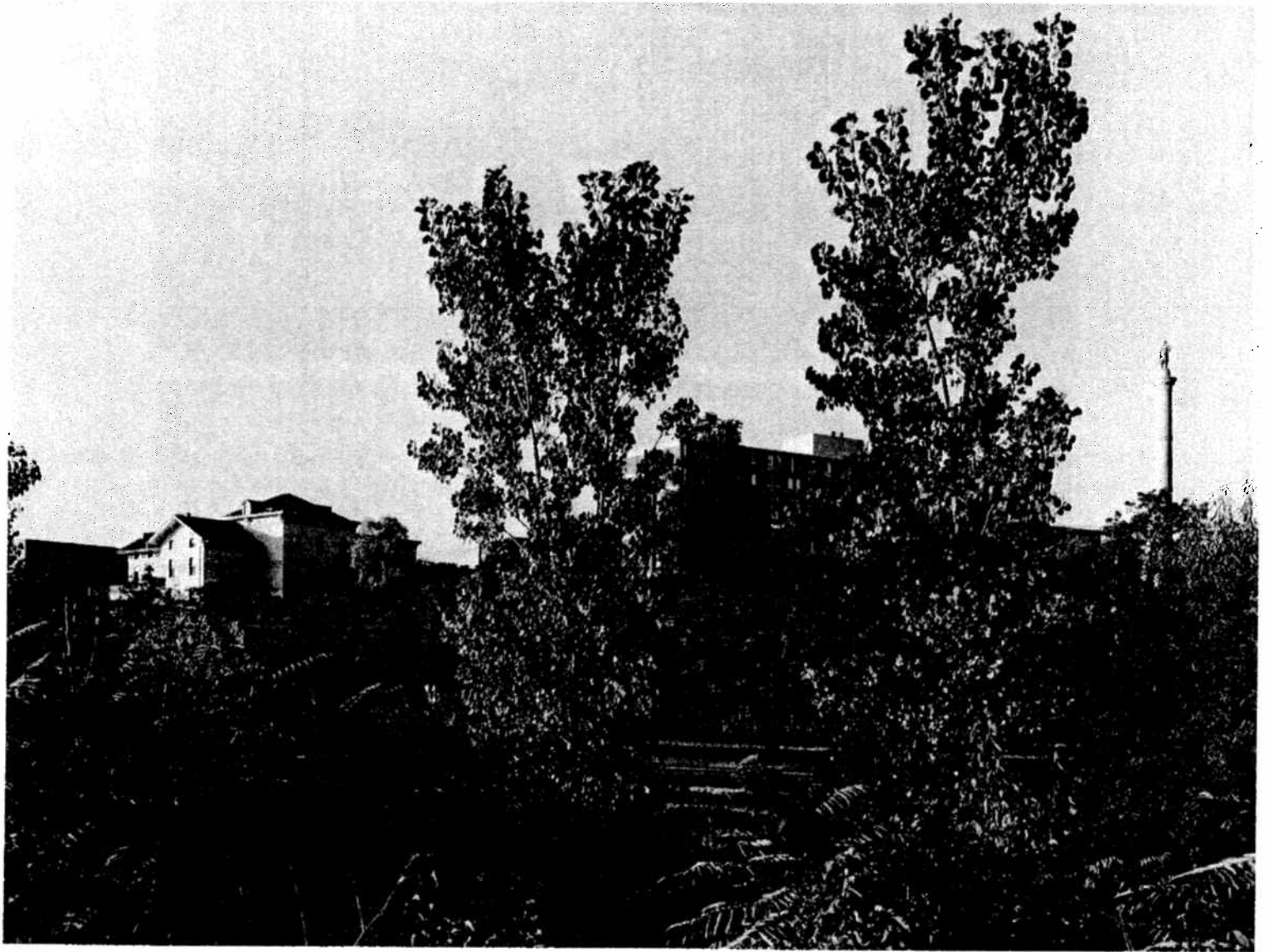
Its earliest Italianate-styled sections were designed by W.W. Boyington, the architect of the Old Water Tower. It has been added on to several times since, with the additions surrounding a common light well.

Significant Features: The designation specifies "the exterior of the original 1864 building and its additions."

Recommended to City Council: January 17, 1989

Ward: 4 (Alderman Preckwinkle)

Ownership: It is owned by the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, which does not consent to the designation.

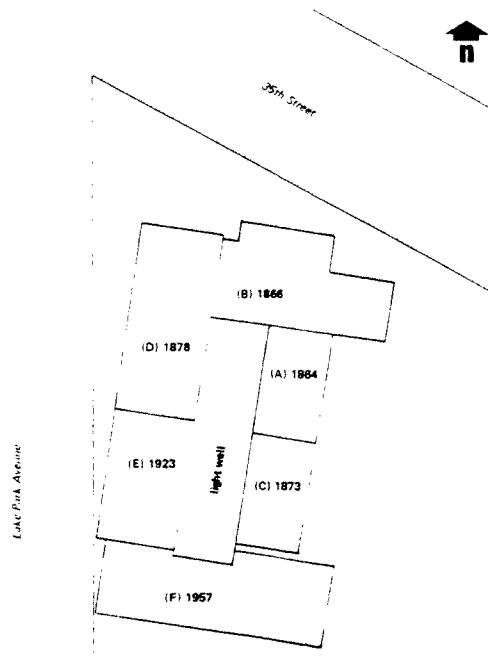


Located on the lake shore at 35th Street, the Soldiers' Home has overlooked the park for over 130 years. Together with the memorial to Senator Stephen Douglas (far right), a designated Chicago Landmark, the Soldiers' Home tells the story of Chicago during the Civil War years.

SOLDIERS' HOME
739 East 35th Street
Chicago, Illinois

Dates of Construction: Section A - 1864
 Section B - 1866
 Section C - 1873
 Section D - 1878
 Section E - 1923
 Section F - 1957

Architect: W.W. Boyington Section B - 1866



The Soldiers' Home is a visual reminder of the enormous contribution made to the Civil War effort by the citizens of Chicago and to the care of homeless and troubled children by the Archdiocese of Chicago. In 1864, the home site was located outside the southern edge of the city limits at the shore of Lake Michigan and adjacent to Camp Douglas, and the first University of Chicago. The establishment of the Soldiers' Home was part of a national movement begun in New York by private citizens, to aid the Union soldier. The United States Sanitary Commission was established in 1861 at the beginning of the Civil War to supplement the personal and medical needs of the Union soldier fighting in the war. The Soldiers' Home became a permanent location for the efforts of Chicago women to provide these services to the soldier in transit. This effort was led by pioneer feminist and suffragist Mary Livermore, who directed the Northwestern Sanitary Commission in Chicago and established the Northwestern Sanitary Fair which raised the funds to build and support the Home. The original sections of the Soldiers' Home were built in two phases. The first section, which constituted a rear wing to the south, was built in 1864. The main building fronting on 35th Street was erected in 1866. Although an architect was not listed for the design of the first part of the building, W.W. Boyington was credited with the design of the main building. Since the 1864 section was designed for future expansion, Boyington was probably the architect for the original section as well. After the Chicago Fire of 1871, the Soldiers' Home was sold to the Sisters of St. Joseph to be used as the new location for the St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum which was destroyed in the fire. Over the ensuing years, four additions have been built to accommodate the activities of the Home. The Home is now the St. Joseph's Carondelet Child Center which focuses on the care, education, and treatment of children with emotional problems.

Early History

After the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, the Civil War began and both the Union and the Confederacy began to build up their armies. Cook County and the other northern counties of Illinois were designated by Governor Richard Yates as the "Northern Military District of Illinois." By this same order, a military camp for the new district, Camp Douglas, was constructed in Chicago for the instruction of volunteer troops. Camp Douglas covered sixty acres of prairie land which had been part of the estate of Stephen A. Douglas. Chicago, as a major rail center, became a central transit point for soldiers with over 25,000 men trained for battle at Camp Douglas during the first year it served as a military camp. In February, 1862, the regiments stationed at Camp Douglas were ordered to the field, leaving the camp nearly empty. During that same month, Fort Donelson in Tennessee was captured and 9,000 Confederate prisoners were sent to Camp Douglas. By the end of the war in 1865, over 12,000 prisoners were incarcerated at Camp Douglas.

In June of 1862, the Young Men's Christian Association and the Chicago Sanitary Commission, a branch of the Northwestern Sanitary Commission, a branch of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, united to provide a temporary home for the many soldiers traveling through Chicago to and from their field assignments. The greatest need of the soldiers was determined to be medical services or room and board during their stop-over in Chicago. The decision was made that this project should be undertaken by the women of Chicago, and that the board of directors of the Soldiers' Home would include one woman from each of the city churches. Fundraising began within the first month with donations and pledges totaling \$5,000. The old Mansion House, located at No. 45 Randolph Street, was to be rented and renovated for the soldiers by July 4, 1862. By the later part of 1863, as the war escalated, wounded soldiers from the battlefields, paroled prisoners, and new recruits filled the home beyond its capacity, and the building became inadequate to provide the needed services for the soldiers. The board of directors decided to establish a permanent Soldiers' Home for the use of disabled soldiers.

Mrs. A.H. Hoge and Mrs. Mary Livermore presented the idea of a fundraising fair to the Northwestern Sanitary Commission to draw on a wider base of public support in an effort to increase funding for continued support of the military men. The First Chicago Sanitary Fair was held during the last two weeks of October, 1863. Donations were requested by Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. Hoge from cities throughout the East Coast, including New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Pittsburgh. On the opening day of the fair, a parade was held and a delegation of farmers from Lake County, consisting of one hundred wagons loaded with produce, followed the marching soldiers. The wagons were decorated with red, white, and blue banners, the lead wagon bearing a flag with the inscription, "The gift of Lake County to our brave boys in the hospitals, through the Great Northwestern Fair". The fundraising activities included a grand bazaar, a dining hall that served over 1500 dinners a day, a Manufactures Hall for the display and sale of heavy machinery, an Art Gallery in the McVickers Theater, and in the Court House a hall filled with "rare and valuable relics and trophies" of the war. The evenings were filled with various entertainments organized by the fair committee. The most valuable and valued gift that was donated was the original draft of the Proclamation of Emancipation, written and cor-

rected by President Abraham Lincoln. This document, donated by the President, sold for \$3,000 to the Honorable T.B. Bryan, an active supporter of the Soldiers' Home and later President of its Board of Directors. Judge Bryan donated the document to the fair where it was sold at auction for \$10,000. This money was used to begin construction of the first wing for the permanent Soldiers' Home the next year. The proceeds of this fair were \$86,000, more than triple the amount expected by the organizing committee and considered a great success.

The Second Chicago Sanitary Fair opened at the end of May, 1865 but this time for the benefit of both the Northwestern Sanitary Commission and the Soldiers' Home. Enthusiasm for the fair was diminished with the assassination of President Lincoln on April 14, 1865. The country went into mourning for him but the opening of the fair renewed their dedication to the support of the servicemen. The inaugural ceremonies for the fair were opened by Judge T.B. Byran. An original poem and hymn were presented, and Governor R.J. Oglesby gave a speech on the importance of supporting the soldiers. Generals Grant, Sherman, and Hooker attended and spoke of the appreciation of the military for the support of the fair. This fair was on a larger scale than the first one and was expected to raise an enormous amount of money. The fair lasted three weeks and funds raised amounted to \$240,000 of which the Soldiers' Home received \$83,500. This amount enabled the directors to proceed with construction of the main building. Support for disabled soldiers continued even though General Lee had surrendered to General Grant at the end of April and the war was ending.

In 1864 sixty-two Chicago women were engaged in the work of the Soldiers' Home and twenty from neighboring states were honorary members. During the year there had been 46,384 arrivals, 96,909 meals prepared, 16,481 lodgings, and 2,557 patients medically treated. Besides caring for the sick and disabled at the Home, the women attended to the needs of sick soldiers at private homes, and sent convalescent soldiers and the bodies of deceased soldiers back to their homes. By 1865, arrivals were up to 60,000 and over 167,000 meals had been prepared for soldiers. At the Home, five hundred and seventy-seven sick and disabled soldiers received care. At the opening of the new main building in 1866, there were ninety-nine inmates of whom fifteen were blind veterans, twenty disabled soldiers studying at the Commercial College, and the rest crippled or otherwise disabled.

The Soldiers' Home was incorporated as a charitable institution by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Illinois in February, 1867. Judge and Mrs. Bradwell were appointed as a special committee to represent the Home and request an appropriation from the General Assembly. The State of Illinois approved a grant for \$24,000 for the continued support of the Home. The Bradwells, long-time supporters of the Soldiers' Home, were also active in the movement for women's rights. Mrs. Bradwell was the first woman in the United States to apply for admission to the bar. Refused because of her sex and marital status, she later secured passage of a law that prohibited discrimination against women when applying for employment because of sex.

By 1869 when the appropriation was received by the Home, only forty-one inmates were in the Home and preparations were being made to close the institution. In accordance

with a joint resolution of the Senate and House of Representatives passed in 1869, inmates were transferred to National Homes established by Congress. Some of the disabled soldiers at the Chicago Soldiers' Home were transferred during the year, but many were not qualified to enter the National Homes. Because of this population, the Home remained open until it was sold in 1870. With a portion of the funds, a smaller building was constructed in South Evanston and opened in 1871. The remaining twenty-six disabled soldiers were transferred to this home.

St. Joseph's Carondelet Child Center

The Sisters of St. Joseph have supervised educational and custodial programs in Chicago for both children and adults over the past 125 years. The focus of the programs located in the Soldiers' Home has changed to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet came to Chicago in 1864 at the request of Bishop James Duggan to supervise the St. Joseph Orphan Asylum located at Wabash Avenue and Superior Street until it was completely destroyed in the Chicago Fire of 1871. The 280 children were transferred to three locations, 100 to St. Louis, 100 to Cincinnati and the 80 youngest children stayed in a Jesuit school located at 12th and May streets in Chicago. In 1872, the Soldiers' Home was purchased as the new home for the orphanage and the children returned to Chicago. In 1873, the bricks of the building that was destroyed by the fire were salvaged and used in the construction of the two-story addition (Section C on the attached map). In 1912, the name and program focus was changed to St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless, and the home became a temporary shelter for single women and abused women and their children and for neglected children. The Visitation and Aid Society worked with the abused women and their children to help them become reestablished in the community with housing and employment. They also worked with the families of the neglected children who were given temporary shelter. In 1918, the work of this Visitation and Aid Society was assigned to the newly established Catholic Charity Bureau.

In 1953, recognizing the need for specialized care for the emotionally disturbed child, Catholic Charities asked the Sisters at St. Joseph's to extend the program to include this type of care. This was a pilot program in the field of child care. The emotional problems of the children became the precipitating factor that led to their referral to St. Joseph's. After approximately ten years, it became apparent there was a great need for this type of program. The Sisters volunteered to change the focus of their program, and in 1965 St. Joseph's became a treatment center for emotionally disturbed children. The present program provides an educational and psychological treatment program in a residential setting for twenty-eight boys between the ages of five and fourteen. A similar day program is provided for twenty-five boys and girls.

The Design of the Soldiers' Home

The Soldiers' Home demonstrates an overall Italianate influence, with the exception of the last addition built in 1957. The irregular outline and restrained ornament offered by this style made it popular in America between 1840 and 1880. The Italianate style was

first introduced to the general public in a book published in the 1840s by patternbook author Andrew Jackson Downing, titled *Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening, Adapted to North America*. The style was characterized by a general emphasis on height, wide eaves usually supported by large brackets, tall thin first floor windows, and a low pitched roof topped with a cupola. This style was considered extremely picturesque and practical. The outline of this building style with its slight pitch of the roof and carved brackets against the sky was considered very pleasing. The irregular massing allowed exceptional freedom in planning future additions to the structure in almost any direction. The simplicity of the detail and the practicality of the massing lend themselves to the needs of a utilitarian building for institutional use.

The Soldiers' Home is located at the southeast corner of Lake Park Avenue and 35th Street. The east side of the building is bounded by the Illinois Central railroad tracks, Lake Shore Drive and further east, Lake Michigan. To the south of the building are low-rise residential buildings. The six sections of the building form a rectangle with a large light well in the center. Section A was originally built in 1864 as a wing to the then-proposed main building, Section B, built in 1866. These two sections are similar in design with low pitched roofs joined at the fourth story of each building. Both sections are faced in common brick with the front and east facades finished in stucco on top of the brick. The windows are double-hung with a Joliet limestone hooded arch and sill. A limestone string course also runs along each window sill line. The cornice is supported by double carved wooden brackets set in a paneled frieze. Section C, a simple two-story brick building with a flat roof, was added in 1873 after the building was sold to the Sisters of St. Joseph to be used as an orphanage. Section D, which includes a chapel, has similar but more elaborate details than the original building. It forms the entrance to the Home and was added in 1878. The chapel is located on the second floor of the three-story building and is accentuated by arched stained glass windows on the north and west sides of the addition. In 1923, a compatible addition was built behind and connected to Section D. The details of the chapel and main buildings are repeated in this four-story addition. The last addition was constructed in 1957, across the rear of the buildings, to form the interior light well. Section F is of red brick, four stories with a basement, a flat roof, and of simple rectangular design.

The Architect of the Soldiers' Home

William W. Boyington was one of the most esteemed and prolific architects in the Midwest during the second half of the nineteenth century. In his obituary for Boyington in the November, 1898, issue of *Inland Architect*, P.B. Wight reported:

The statement he is said to have once made, that if all the buildings he had planned were placed in a row, they would reach from Chicago to Highland Park, a distance of about 25 miles, was probably no exaggeration.

Born in Southwick, Massachusetts on July 22, 1818, of pioneer stock, Boyington was trained as an engineer and architect in New York State. For a time he practiced there and was elected a member of the state legislature, serving as chairman of its Committee on

Public Buildings. He settled permanently in Chicago in 1853.

As a professional, he was responsible for many types of buildings such as schools, churches, hotels, office buildings and railroad stations. Among his notable Chicago structures were various buildings for the first University of Chicago, located at 34th Street and Cottage Grove Avenue (1859, 1863, 1865; all demolished); Chicago Water Tower and Pumping Station (designated a Chicago Landmark on October 6, 1971); the first Sherman House at Clark and Randolph streets (1859, demolished in 1910); Rosehill Cemetery Entrance (designated a Chicago Landmark on October 16, 1980); and the Chicago Board of Trade Building at LaSalle and Jackson (1885, demolished in 1928 for construction of the present Holabird and Root building). He was considered a foremost practitioner in the field of hotel and church design, and he received commissions for churches in Indiana, Iowa, Ohio, and Michigan and for hotels as far away as Colorado and Canada. Within Illinois he collaborated on the design of the state penitentiary at Joliet and the completion of the State Capitol in Springfield. Always active in professional affairs, he was elected the first president of the Chicago Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, organized in 1870.

Boyington moved to Highland Park, Illinois, where he was elected mayor in 1875. He died there on October 16, 1898, in his eightieth year. Boyington's designs ranged from castellated Gothic to Romanesque to Italianate to Second Empire. Although his work was not innovative, it exemplified the eclecticism of Victorian architecture at its height.

The Soldiers' Home is important to the City of Chicago because it is the last remaining building which represents a tangible connection between the City and the Civil War. For over 121 years, the Soldiers' Home has been a reminder of the contributions the citizens of Chicago made to military men during the Civil War, and also a representation of institutional care of children that dates back over 130 years in the Diocese of Chicago. During the Civil War, the population was consumed with patriotism and a dedication to the cause of freedom. The foremost priority of the citizens of the city, through the founding of the Soldiers' Home, was to find a way to support military men in transit with medical care and room and board. The Soldiers' Home was the predecessor of organizations such as the United Services Organization (U.S.O.) that provide services around the country for military personnel and their families. That service tradition continues in the building today through St. Joseph's Carondelet Child Center. The administrators of the center have great respect for the history of the building and have undertaken a necessary and sensitive rehabilitation plan to increase energy efficiency and enhance the appearance of the structure.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andreas, A. T. *History of Chicago*, vol. II. Chicago: A. T. Andreas & Company, 1885.

Chicago Tribune. January 26, 1864; January 2, June 18, July 29, October 2, December 29, 1865; March 18, May 7, 11, 1866; May 24, 1905.

Duis, Perry R. and Holt, Glen E. "The Forgotten Monument on 35th Street." *Chicago Magazine*, February, 1982, pp. 104-07.

Gilbert, Paul and Bryson, Charles Lee. *Chicago and Its Makers*. Chicago: Felix Mendelsohn, 1929.

A Guide to the City of Chicago. Chicago: T. Ellwood Zell & Company, 1868.

Schnell, J. Christopher. "Mary Livermore and the Great Northwestern Fair." *Chicago History*, 4 (Spring, 1975), 34-43.

Wright, Peter B. "Memorial to the Late W. W. Boyington." *The Inland Architect*, XXXII (November, 1898), 32.

Additional research material used in the preparation of this report is on file at the office of the Commission on Chicago Landmarks and is available to the public.

Criteria for Designation

The following criteria, as set forth in Section 2-120-620 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago, were considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining that the Soldiers' Home should be recommended for landmark designation.

CRITERION 1

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

The Soldiers' Home is important to the heritage of Chicago because it is the last remaining building which represents a tangible connection between the city and the Civil War. The Soldiers' Home was the result of the efforts of Chicago women to provide personal and medical services to the soldier in transit. This effort was led by pioneer feminist and suffragist Mary Livermore, who directed the Northwestern Sanitary Fair which raised the funds to build and support the Home.

CRITERION 4

Its exemplification of an architectural style or type distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship.

The overall architectural style of the structure in its first three phases of construction was Italianate, and every subsequent addition with the exception of the last in 1957 was sympathetic to the original design. As a home for disabled Union veterans of the Civil War, it is a singular survivor -- a unique building type of exceptional rarity. William W. Boyington was the designer of the 1866 addition and was the likely designer of the original 1864 structure. He was an esteemed and prolific architect who executed the majority of his commissions in the Chicago area. One of his most notable designs is the Chicago Water Tower and Pumping Station at Michigan and Chicago avenues, designated a Chicago Landmark on October 6, 1971.

CRITERION 7

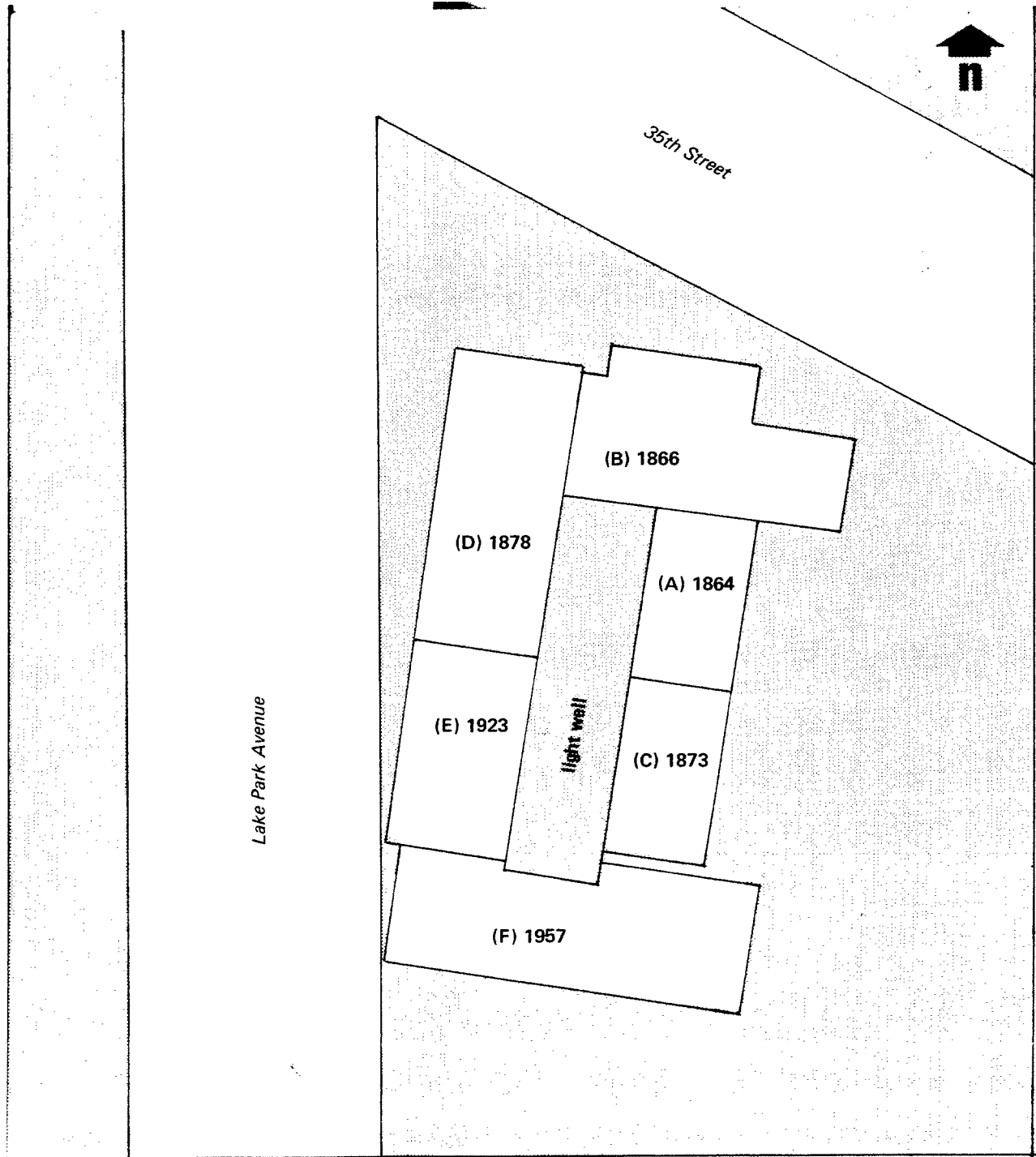
Its unique location or distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Chicago.

Located on the lake shore at 35th Street, the Soldiers' Home has overlooked the park and the tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad for over 130 years. Its position across the street from the funerary monument of Senator Stephen Douglas, the previous owner of the land on which it stands, provides the building with a unique and historically appropriate environment. Together with the Douglas Memorial, which was designated a Chicago Landmark on September 28, 1977, the Soldiers' Home tells the story of Chicago in the Civil War years. Built to provide a charitable service to military veterans, it has continued to serve the City through programs first for orphans and more recently for emotionally troubled children through the St.

Joseph's Carondelet Chicago Center, its current occupant.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Based on its evaluation of the Soldiers' Home, the staff recommends that the significant features be identified as the exterior of the building.



SOLDIERS' HOME
739 East 35th Street
Chicago, Illinois

Acknowledgments

CITY OF CHICAGO

Richard M. Daley, Mayor

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

J. F. Boyle, Jr., Commissioner

Charles Thurow, Deputy Commissioner

Staff:

Carol White, research and writing

Cedric Jones, production

Illustrations:

All photos by Bob Thall.

Cover illustration: Andreas, *History of Chicago*, 1885)

This report was originally prepared in 1975 and rewritten in 1985. It was revised and reprinted in April 1996.

COMMISSION ON CHICAGO LANDMARKS

Peter C. B. Bynoe, Chairman
Joseph A. Gonzalez, Vice Chairman
Albert M. Friedman, Secretary
John W. Baird
J.F. Boyle, Jr.
Kein L. Burton
Marian Despres
Larry Parkman
Seymour Persky

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, whose offices are located at 320 N. Clark St., Room 516, Chicago, IL 60610; Ph: 312-744-3200; TDD Ph: 744-2958.